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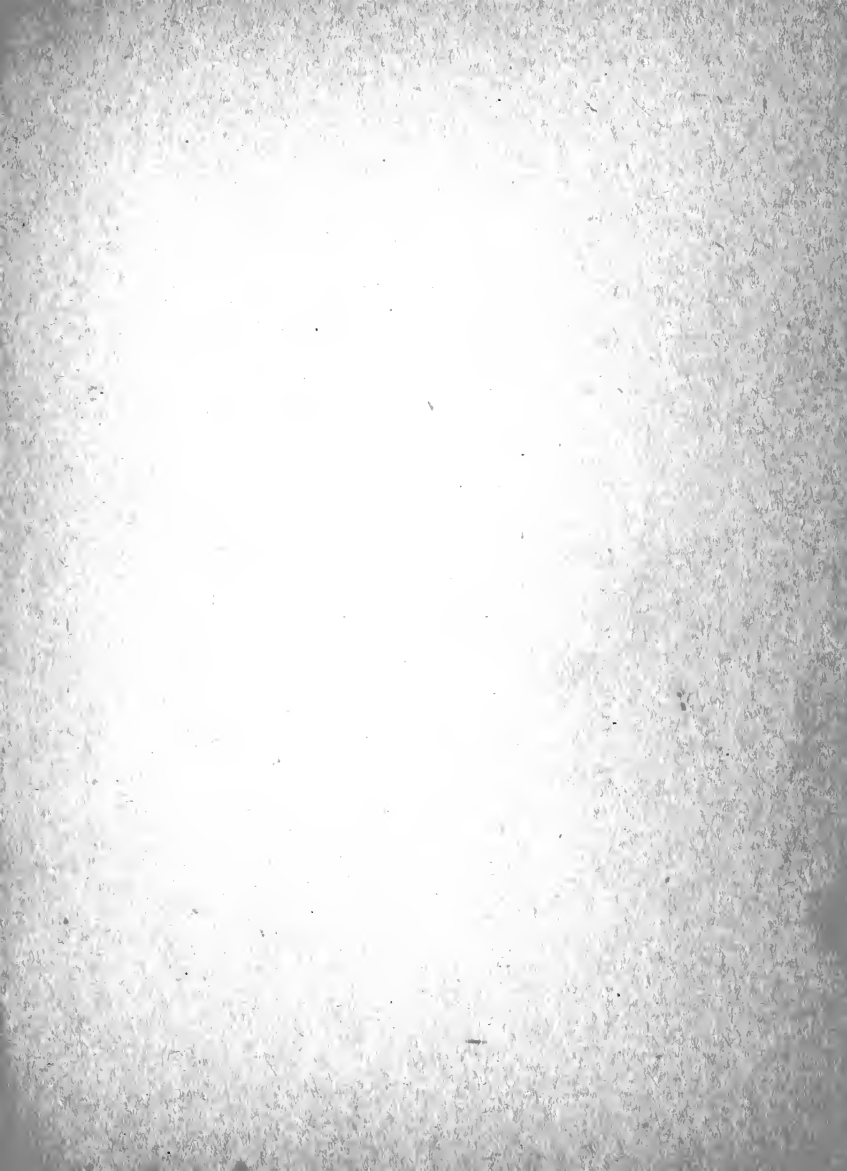
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1904

Bubbles From Home-Made Soap

Allan Thornton Simonds







BUBBLES

FROM

HOME-MADE SOAP

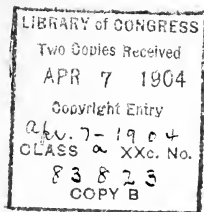


BY



ALLAN THORNTON SIMONDS

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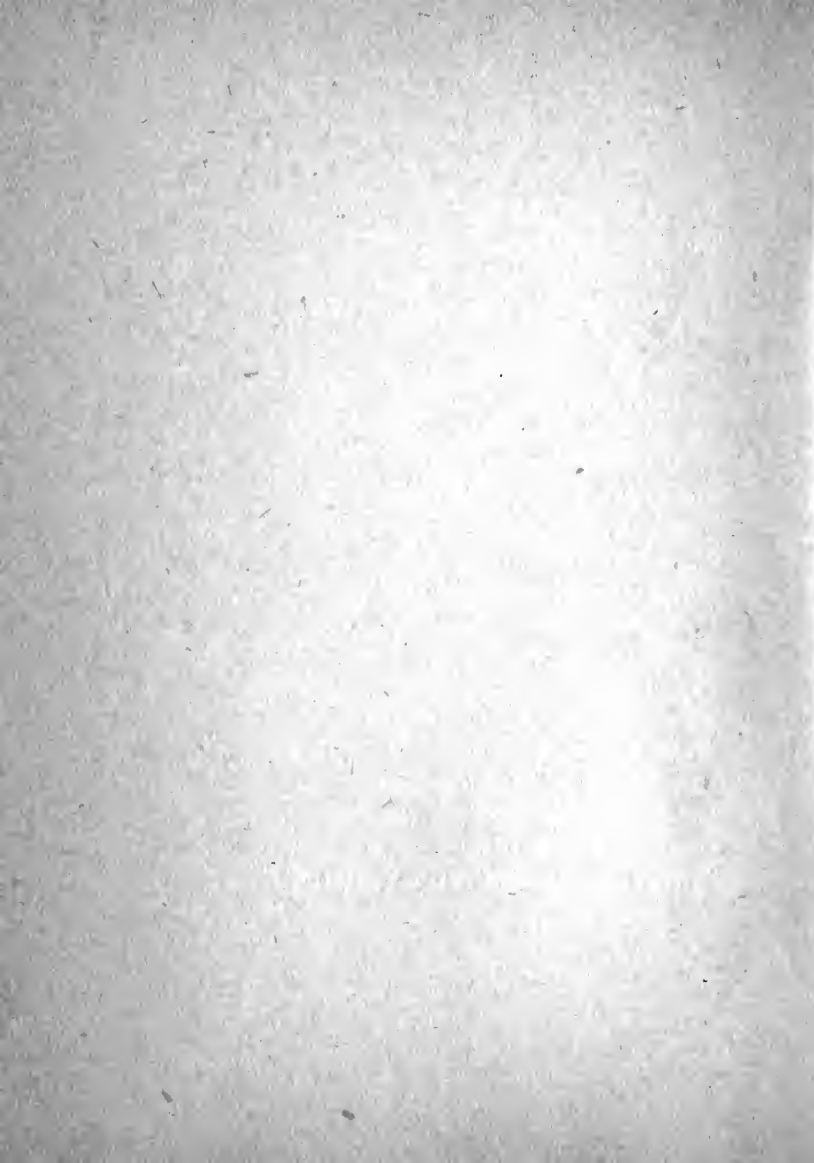
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Written without perspiratory attempt; published
without sky-piercing expectation; submitted without
further remarks.

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JIST BUBBLES.

*Ever been a pesky kid,
Doin' nothin' that y're bid?
Sneakin' 'way off out o' doors
Mebby shirkin' half y'r chores,
An' a-sloppin' up y'r duds
'Ith a wash-pan full o' suds,
Makin' bubbles?*

*Watch 'em floatin' in the air—
Picters in 'em makes y' stare!
Red an' yeller, green and blue;
Houses, fences, trees an'—you,
'Ith y'r face stretched out a mile—
'Nuff to make a preacher smile,
Makin' bubbles!*

*Tell y' sumpin' mighty slick—
It's to float 'em on the crick;
Say they're battle-ships 'ith guns—
'Nited States an' forrin ones,
An' they have an orful fight,
Smashin' vessels left an' right—
Jist bubbles.*

*Bubble-picters kinder seem
Like the faces in a dream.
You supposin'—dear me suz!—
S'posin'—sich—things—ever—wuz?
Git to drawin' water quick!
Maw's a-comin' 'ith a stick!
Darn the bubbles!*

*Poem bizness seems to me
Like a bubble, wher' y' see
Things that's sorter queer and quaint—
Mebby is' an mebby aint;
Jist some purty, touchy shells,
Full o' air an' nothin' else,
Like bubbles.*

*Maw, she say: "No use to try!"
'Lows my Peggy-sus can't fly!
But I only got a hope
Mout could learn him jist to lope
Er to single-foot er rack—
Me a-settin' on his back
Blowin' bubbles!*

*Others fellers got some dope
Beats a chunk o' home-made soap;
Blow the'r bubbles 'ith a crust
That y'r breathin' wouldn't bu'st,
An' they gits to write the'r name
On the honor-roll o' fame
F'r the'r bubbles.*

*But f'r me—I mosey 'long
'Ith my whistle-toon er song,
An' when some one says to me
That my verse don't seem to be
Good as other folkses' does,
W'y, I never said it wuz—
'S jist bubbles.*

THE PASTOR

In fields of quiet, peaceful green
 He leads his sheep;
And when, amid some sylvan scene
 They fall asleep,
With manner not ungentle then
 He wields a prod
And stirs the slothful sons of men
 Tow'rd heaven and God.

He cateth viands to intense
 Satiety;
Of cakes and puddings in immense
 Variety.
He praiseth loud what he hath eat
 And saith a wish
His wife could have that same receipt
 To make the dish.

He readeth sermons deep and wise
 To budding youth;
And vieweth, with polite surprise,
 Our baby's tooth.

He makes assertion o'er and o'er,
With flattering tongue,
That tooth was never grown before
By child so young!

He listeth while the gudewife's tale
She doth confide,
Of family troubles new or stale
Which e'er abide;
At raising bread or raising son,
Her evil luck—
The first falls flat; the other one
Reads *Punch* and *Puck*.

His ministrations are the rights
Of dead and quick;
He cometh five successive nights
To nurse our sick;
And on succeeding Sabbath morn
We heave a sigh,
Pronouncing, with outspoken scorn,
His sermon "dry."

He holds the choir in firm restraint

And sweet attune;

He husheth each rebellious plaint

Full wondrous soon;

When they desire to sing "Come ye

That Love the Lord"

He wills they must "Abide With Me"

And they accord!

His tithes are paid in useful things

He cannot eat,

The while his family bravely sings

Of "joy complete."

His people praise with one accord

His modest worth

And mean that he shall have reward—

But not on earth!

THE MEDIATOR.

Between two enemies embroiled,
Their deadly weapons bravely foiled,
 He stands;
His voice gives loud command to cease
And forceful arbiters of peace
 His hands.

He sternly beats their weapons down
And bids them, with a kingly frown,
 Give o'er;
To sheath their anger-poisoned prongs
Nor try to right their petty wrongs
 In gore.

A moment is the battle quelled—
A minute's space its tide is held
 In check;
And then, with indignation's might
Both combatant's rise up and smite
 His neck.

CUPID'S DISAVOWAL.

Gentlemen: My name is Cupid—
Pedigrees are somewhat stupid;
(Please excuse the doubtful diction, but that word
rhymes with my name)
In the brave old days and Roman
I was champion lightweight bowman;
Unrefrigerated mustard, too, when flirting was the
game.

When I questioned gentle Psyche,
Promptly she replied "Sure, Mikey!"
(I had asked her if her love for me was really the stuff)
And although maternal Venus
Tried to start a wedge between us
We convinced her that our wedding was no morgan-
atic bluff.

It was then considered duty
And the privilege of Beauty
(And was also much the simplest way to save her prec-
ious hide)

• The victorious bloody slasher
To acknowledge as her masher,
And to hustle to his rendezvous and there in peace abide.

I must beg your kind permission
To correct a superstition;
(It's alarming how you spread a fake report down there
on earth)
'Tis some journalist's invention,
And with faith in their intention
Credit all your penny papers for exactly what they're
worth.

They evolve a wad of taffy
And a column write-up daffy
(Phrases such as "Cupid's capers" or "his arrowlanded
well")
When the victor of the tourney
Starts off on a wedding journey
To acclimate his new purchase to his private gilded hell.

When you're reading in the papers
What they say are Cupid's capers,
(Just excuse me while I goo-goo at a school-girl passing
by)

Go and sponge off the excitement—
I demur to the indictment
And you needn't worry, sonny; I can prove an alibi.

I will tell you on the level,
There's a guy you call the Devil,
(Though I wouldn't recognize him, for he isn't in our
set)

Has me on the hoodlum carriage
In the art of plotting marriage—
That's a fact on which to wager all the dough that you
can get.

When you hear a wedding's brewing,
Don't you call it Cupid's doing;
(Not upon your little tin-type of ecstatic pulchritude!)
The mistake is unintentional
As well as quite conventional,
But slandering a helpless god is very, very rude.

Oft you say I've shot an arrow
Through some old gazaboe's marrow,
(Fact about it is a scheming woman stabbed him with
a look)
Who will find when he is mated
He was beautifully baited,
And his tootsy-wootsy's little hand impaled him on
the hook!

When some dude with titled trimmin'
Makes a dicker for your women,
(And a little boot upon the side—you fix it in advance)
I am forced, without elation,
To bite off a day's vacation—
Did I own a pair, I'd bribe a man to kick my Sunday
pants.

When she lets some jay entire her
To obtain permish to splice her
('Tis a heartless daylight bargain while yours truly is
asleep)
And your daughter quits her honey
For a bloodless clod with money,
Then I hustle for my handkerchief and take a decent
weep.

I will say to ye who edit,
And accept the blame or credit—
(I can stand for all the cussedness that really is mine)
That I concentrate my forces
To promotion of *divorces*,
Though I do a little grafting for His Nibs, St. Valen-
tine.

Please to grant my small contention
And revise your style of mention;
(It would be revision proper if you stuck to what is
true!)
Kindly credit Mister Sooty,
For he bravely does his duty;
And, according to your proverb, give the Devil all his
due.

THE CAPTAIN'S ROSE.

They marched away in the morning
With banners upon the breeze,
For the note of war gave sound afar
And called them across the seas.
Grieved was the Captain's sweetheart,
Her bosom a storm of woes;
She witnessed her love by the heavens above
And her guerdon—a snow-white rose.

The rose, she said, was the emblem
Of constancy and truth,
And she paused to bless with her lips' caress
The pledge of her love and youth.
And ever in march and battle,
In fortress or sultry plain,
The white rose told to the Captain bold
The message that silenced pain.

It told, through the passing seasons,
Of her who would wait at home—
Would wait apart with an aching heart
Till the Captain again should come.

It told of the promised meeting
When smiling should banish tears;
Of skies all bright and of love's delight
To pay for the lonely years.

And when, to the subtle beauty,
The flower of an Orient race,
With soft eyes bright by a luring light,
And dimples, and childish grace,
His comrades had yielded homage
And gave of the heart and life
(For less of worth is the land of birth
Than the love of an alien wife);

The Captain withstood their sieges
With eyes that were beauty-blind,
For the white rose said he should one day wed
The Girl, if but fate were kind;
If the fickle chance of battle
And the dusky warrior's knife,
And the fever's breath with its touch of death
Should spare him reason and life.

II.

How well wrote the Scottish poet
Her faith is a mist-wrought dream—
That woman's trust may be writ in dust

Or stamped on the running stream !
For the rose was never whiter
Than the cheeks of the Captain were,
When he saw (in the State, at her old home's gate)
A child—with the eyes—of—*her*.

A plague to your stilted morals.
That brand with a curse of birth—
Your open jeer and your secret sneer
For the Ishmael tribe of earth.
That torture without relenting—
The rack and the wheel of scorn,
When the pulses wild of your wayward child
Have sinned, and a man is born.

But honor your slave-mart marriage,
Where woman is bought ad sold ;
And your daughter's life with the name of wife
May be had for a lump of gold.
Your grandchildren well may curse you
With tongue that is loosed and free
That a mother's soul unto hell's control
Was the price of their right to be.

III.

They told him the simple story—
Her marriage within the year
To a cottage grand and a stretch of land,
And a husband—"He isn't here;
Was missing a few months later—
Was missing, and never found;
A deserted bride—and the blow to pride
Inflicted a mortal wound.

"But the child of the fatal union
Was born ere she went with Death,
And when parting came she spoke your name
With the voice of her latest breath.
Her life had been sadly darkened
By mysterious, hidden woes,
But she brightly smiled when she named the child
And said : 'You must call her Rose.'"

IV.

Perhaps you have seen the Captain—
A man at the age of prime;
On a youthful face there's a saddened trace
Not wrought by the hand of time.

There's always a small companion
Wherever the Captain goes;
'Tis an eerie child with dark eyes wild—
They call her the Captain's Rose.

V.

There's laughter and love and music
To fill all the world of youth,
But the chill and blight of an Arctic night
In the wake of departed Truth.
Oh Fates, it would be in kindness,
A merciful act, and just,
That you still the heart when you bid us part
From the charm of faith and trust.

For ever, while creatures human
Inhabit the earth, we know
In the inner breast of the man that's best
There blossoms a flower of snow;
Not nurtured of elements earthly,
Nor watered nor fed; in sooth
That blossom fair is the child of air—
The dream of A Woman's Truth.

CONSISTENCY.

Oh maiden, thou whose beauties rare
Are envied by the fairest fair!
I own it gives my soul distress
To see you pose in such undress
Before the cam'ra's wicked eye—
Perhaps you've time to tell me why!

Why is it you regard as sin
The dress that comes not to your chin;
With indignation thrust away
And scorn to wear by light of *day*
The garb which yields to vision rude
Your factory for infants' food?

But when in all the ball-room's glare
You seek display for such a share
That one with brain of lightest heft
Could tell minutely what is left;
And fancy your excess invites
To dwell on such enchanting sights!

And when you have your photo made
We see again you're not afraid,
But boldly ape that ancient art
Where clothing played so small a part.
This exhibition well can cope
With pictured "ad" of bathing soap!

But when, within the public place
A mother holds in her embrace
The infant who, with kick and squeal
Makes protest for his midday meal,
She feeds the child as mothers must—
To your intense, profound disgust!

IN THE TEMPLE.

"Thou shalt not have another god but Me!"
And they replied: "We worship only Thee!"
(They worshipped standing forth where all could see.)

"And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself!"
Six days the precept lay upon the shelf,
The worshippers in fierce pursuit of pelf.

Six days within the market-place they spent;
Their gods were Profit, Interest and Rent;
Their prayer: "Give us this day our ten per cent!"

But on the rising of the seventh sun
They came and prayed: "Oh God, Thy will be done—
We follow in the footsteps of Thy Son!"

A million altars saw their incense rise
In vain up to the cold, unheeding skies—
The vapor of a million smoking lies!

A million priests told off their lifeless beads
Upon the Ear that hears, but never heeds
That prayer thrice falsified by selfish deeds.

A million organ peals were loudly rung;
A million empty choruses were sung—
The tribute of the Church's voiceless tongue!

O Church! thy bells again with joy shall ring,
Thy sons and daughters truthfully shall sing
When you shall prize the *man* above the *thing*!

Thy City Zion may be gilded free;
Her streets with purest gold may paved be—
Her gates shall not respond to golden key!

Awake! Awake! Restore the living truth
Thy martyrs died for in thy early youth,
Enduring persecution without ruth:

That better far thy prayers should be unsaid
Than that the sons of men should strive for bread
In vain, with "Christian" peoples overfed.

THE GLOBULAR BEAUTY.

Stare ye not with wond'ring eyes
Nor exclaim in voiced surprise
When you view the printed page of our advertising age,
Heralding, to far and near
The renown of Swatzer's beer.

"Made extravagantly pure;
No disease it cannot cure;
Forty medals it has won—greatest drink beneath the
sun!
Grand compound of malt and hops,"
Then, for lack of space, he stops.

But before he finds the end
Bottled beer's admiring friend
Never once forgets to tell that our women love it well
And with great propriety
Drink it, in "society."

Sing no more of slender grace
Nor of marble-sculptured face!
Sorrow not, ye simple bard—we admit your task is hard;
But, old hero, do your duty—
Eulogize the new-style beauty!

When you praise my lady's worth
Sing the greatness of her girth!
Say that ne'er was maiden found, more than half so far
around!
Swear that none within the state
Can compare with her in weight!

Say she's like a laden barge—
Oleaginous and large;
That she bears her oily freight with a graceful duckling's
gait;
That her smile is like the moon
And her waist a young balloon!

“Beauty’s in the curving line”

Say professors of design,

And we know that beer but serves to pronounce and
foster curves;

Build our maids well-curved and staunch—

Slight of brain but great of paunch!

Little ’vails it you should sing

Water comes from Nature’s spring.

Virtue, we admit, it hath—for the laundry or the bath!

But for women, don’t you think

Lager beer is quite the drink?

THE REAL AMERICAN GIRL.

Precociously wise and in self contented,
Consciously mistress of all the arts
That woman or devil has e'er invented
For playing at billiards with human hearts;

Worshipping ever at shrines of pleasure,
Seeking for peace where the quest is vain;
Selling herself for a pot of treasure,
A sacrifice to the god of Gain!

Seen at her best as a ball-room beauty,
A glimmer of satin and gleam of pearl—
Artist, you lie! and forget your duty
When you call this thing the American Girl!

Give me the crayon! a master's talent
Is not my aid in this morning's task,
But fingers of lead should be less ungallant
Than picture our girl in your Folly's mask!

I would have you see her without adorning,
 In work-day garments of youth and health;
Her smile that is fearless as truth's own morning,
 Her eyes that outshine all your glint of wealth!

Not swift of retreat at the shadow's falling,
 The voice of distress is not heard in vain;
She hears the helpless and heeds their calling,
 She lends her presence to banish pain.

Not treading the paths which scorn restraining
 Nor chasing false gods with abandon wild;
Not meeting misfortune with weak complaining
 Nor fretful moods of a peevish child.

Not asking that labor shall live without her,
 But ever ready to do her part;
And shedding a radiance all about her,
 The welcome glow of a cheerful heart.

And who shall say that the greater beauty
 Is hers who revels in fashion's art
Or hers who humbly performs each duty
 Nor sells her birthright in pleasure's mart?

Bring forth the scepter of national honor—
Bring out the crown of the nation's love!
These symbols be sure ye bestow upon her
Whose soul's as true as the stars above.

Queen of our hearts and homes confess her—
"God save the Queen!" to the heavens hurl,
While millions of loyal subjects bless her—
Our really, truly American Girl!

THE TELEGRAPH.

Monarch of distance and scorner of space—
Messenger-god at the call of the race;
Oceans and mountains and wind-driven sands
Vanish to naught at the touch of your hands.

Swifter your wings than the carrier's flight;
Swifter than Phœbus pursuing the Night;
Quick as the word to a thought can give birth,
On wings of your magic it flies o'er the earth.

Crossing the deserts and swimming the seas,
Leaping the torrent and chasm with ease;
This is your highway—the thread of a wire;
This is your chariot—an atom of fire!

Mercury, trained through the heavens to rove,
(Messenger-god in the service of Jove)
Treading the air with his swift-winged feet,
Bows at your throne to a runner more fleet!

Leagues and leagues multiplied; mile upon mile
Vanish away at your thought or your smile.
'Round the earth, o'er the earth, twice and again—
Messenger-god in the service of men!

ADVICE TO A WIDOW.

Frail, gentle creature, cruelly bereft;
How sadly less than nothing all that's left
For you of life ! What other earthly harms,
Since thy heart's mate was taken from those arms,
Can matter now ? That sorrow shall abide
To chasten thee ; for death cannot divide
Souls truly wed. In any age or clime
I hold that second marriage is a *crime* !

And those dear children, lambkins of your fold !
The mother-breast shall shield them from the cold
And heartless world. Perhaps their father's love
On angel pinions wafted from above
Shall guide their little feet ; 'twere deep disgrace
To dream another man could take his place
With them, his babes ; or e'er with you, his wife !
(How much insurance had he on his life ?)

Some fifteen thousand dollars, did you say?
'Twould well provide against the rainy day !
It seemeth, now, a man's advice were best
As touching how to properly invest.
The treacheries of stock exchange and mart
Most fearsome are to woman's timid heart !
In such predicament 'tis sure you must
Desire a friend whose counsels you can trust !

A friend in whom your darling babes could share
The blessing of a father's tender care;
A friend on whose strong arm yourself could lean,
Protecting you from dangers yet unseen.
Your former husband, looking from above,
Would send his blessing down on such a—love !
To mourn too much—a long, unseemly time—
Is foe to reason, and, in truth, 'tis *crime* !

THE VICTOR.

This story truth and fancy interwove:
A harper, trumpeter and poet strove
Who best could please the ear of mighty Jove.

The first with harmonies so wondrous sweet
The ears of gods and men did softly greet
That they had deemed his victory complete.

Far sweeter than the sweetest song of bird,
His chords swept forth and rapturously stirred
And woke the inmost souls of all who heard.

He ceased. The trumpet's peal rang out afar
To frowning walls whose gates were thrown ajar.
And echoed back the ecstasy of war.

It breathed the wild and ruthless song of strife,
Of wooing death and lightly loving life;
Of clanging shield and spear, and reeking knife.

The poet then in honeyed strains began
To sing the song of love 'twixt maid and man—
The sweetest song since life and love began.

Methought that man below nor gods above
Could e'er resist this song, the song of love,
Nor could it fail to touch the heart of Jove.

Waiting, the three stand forth expectant now,
Each planning to receive with courteous bow
The chaplet of Jove's favor on his brow,

* * * * *

A smith who labored at his forge hard by
Was named to wear the honors from the sky
And Jove in these words told the people why:

"More music to my ear the anvil's ring
"When Labor shapes the honest, useful thing
"Than when the harper strikes his sweetest string;

"Or when the noise of battle thrills the air
"Or gallant youth sings love-songs to the fair.
"So shall the smith my badge of favor wear!"

IN THE LAND OF THE LOST.

In the Land of the Lost Things are longing and hope
Whose story's a book under seal;
Whose clasps e'en the angels shall not dare to ope
Nor its secrets and sorrow reveal.
There are shattered ambitions, a heart that was crushed
By a woman who knew all the cost;
There's a beautiful song that forever is hushed
In the land of the things that are lost.

In the Land of the Lost Things there's many a joy
I number with those that are past;
The loves and the heart-aches I knew as a boy,
The sunshine, the shadows they cast!
There's the bloom of the rose on a sweetheart's fair cheek,
'Twas stolen by Time's fatal frost;
There's the shirt that I sent to the laundry last week
In the land of the things that are lost!

In the land of the Lost Things are coffers of wealth
And jewels of value untold;
There are riches of youth and the treasures of health
Outweighing a mountain of gold;
There's the presence of those whom we cherish no less
Though their graves are time-scarred and age-mossed;
There's the pleated-front shirt that is marked A. T. S.
In the land of the things that are lost!

In the Land of the Lost Things are wishes and hopes
For joys that we never can know;
And the soul is weary as vainly it gropes
Through the darkness, the strife and the woe.
But what shall I care how the journey has cost,
The sorrow, the toil or the hurt—
When I get to the land of the things that are lost
And once more reunite with that shirt!

THE ASTONISHING TRUTH.

Well, Cupid, my boy, how's business?

Have you come around to complain
That the old-time flutter and dizziness

Has gone from my heart and brain?

What nonsense! I'm prone as ever

To welcome your arrow's flight;

And if you were but half-way clever

Or willing to treat me right,

I would serve at your court as gladly

As ever I did before,

And love—why, perhaps, more madly

Than in "puppy-love" days of yore!

Don't bring me a dream of beauty—

Such women are proud and vain;

Forsaking the task of Duty

To serve the command of Gain.

Don't bring me a fund of treasure

In poetical golden curl,

Nor ask me to look with pleasure
 On your fairy-like, doll-like girl;
For my heart has preserved its learning
 (The lessons of trustful youth)
And the blessing for which it's yearning
 Is Woman—combined with Truth!

The woman whose chiefest beauties
 Are those of the heart and mind;
Whose pleasures the homely duties
 That Fashion must leave behind.

So, Cupid, you've but to tell me
 You've one in your whole domain
Like this, and you may compel me
 To enter the lists again.

There are millions? I can't believe it!

 Great guns! and the deuce of spades!
They're angels—ah! I perceive it!

 What's that you say? *Old maids!*

WHEN WE NAVIGATE THE AIR.

There's a lot of people trying
To attain the knack of flying,
And expending time and momey, toil and care
To equip the human race
Just to flit from place to place,
So that mortal man can navigate the air.
Cutting gravitation's tether
We will sail the boundless ether,
Go to see our aunts and cousins up in Mars;
When we want to buy a pattern
We perhaps will call at Saturn—
Yes, we'll study all the fashions in the stars.

The occasion is a marriage?
Scorning clumsy horse-drawn carriage
And noisy, willful, smellful auto-car,
We, in painted airship proud
Will be wed upon a cloud
And will spend our honeymoon upon a star.

Then each common earthly sinner
Can have ordered for his dinner
Fish and fowl and fruit from Neptune—rich and rare!
Go to Venus for a wife—
Won't it be a jolly life
When mortal man can navigate the air ?

When a Sunday morning's dawning
We'll not lie abed a-yawning,
But will start off for a journey 'round the world;
And as swift as daylight's breaking
O'er the nether earth that's waking
"Westward ho!" on wings of morning we'll be whirled.
By the fleetness of our flight
Baffling all pursuit of night,
We will perpetrate a joke that's new and rare:
Out of early morning Sunday
We will steer right into Monday
When mortal man can navigate the air !

And if e'er the case should need
We can double on our speed
And explore enchanted realms of *yesterday*;

And who'd not prefer the quest
 (See the sun rise in the west !)
To half a gross of "cycles of Cathay"?
 On the Eastbound Air Express
 The conductor will, I guess,
Be older than his father—is it fair?
 For each full-grown day he runs
 He will see two rising suns
When mortal man can navigate the air !

L' AFTERTHOUGHT.

But the building of a ship
 That is good for such a trip
Is a task accomplished but in realms of talk;
 And the safest mode today
 (And by odds the surest way)
Is to travel after Adam's fashion—walk !

BOODLING SIMPLIFIED.

Having read, in pictured pages of the monthly magazines,
That brain, not money, leads the world's parade,
I've resolved to whistle "au revoir" to youth's familiar
scenes
And buy a seat upon the Board of Trade.

The potentates and princes of the vast Empire of Greed
Will seek the door that bears my gold initials;
For there they'll find, in letters such as he who runs may
read,
"COMMISSION SALES—SPOT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS."

My cipher telegrams will read: "Please quote a price by
wire—
Six aldermen delivered F. O. B. "
"Advise at once if health inspector prices will be higher,"
Or "Send sixteen policemen C. O. D. "

The evening market papers: "Congressmen are selling
high;

The legislative pit was in a crush;
Alonzo Smith has cornered the available supply
And the shorts are sent to cover with a rush."

Perhaps a few will think it odd that senators should
range

With "bears" and "bulls" and "options," "puts" and
"calls,"

But why not sell 'em openly upon the stock exchange
As well as in the legislative halls?

I think that I've discovered the macadam road to wealth
And social honors, fame and high position;
And as office hours are such as won't infringe upon my
health,
Here's to boodlers—wholesale, retail—on commission!

WHEN I SQUUZ MALINDY'S HAND.

The happiest time in all my life? Wull, that's plum' hard
to say !

I hain't seen no excitin' bizness, now, f'r many a day.
Y'r blood's a rushin', roarin', tearin' current in y'r youth,
But later on it settles down, monot'nous like, an' smooth;
An' things 'at onct 'd filled y'r heart plum' sloshin' full
uv joy—

They don't affect us old folks like they would a gal er boy.
Our lives runs 'ith a quietness that you can't comprehend;
You're jist in the beginnin' an' we're nearin' to'rds the end;
But I'm goin' to make a statement that perhaps y'll
understand—

I wuz happiest the fust time that I squuz Malindy's hand!

Malindy? That's y'r gran'ma, child; Malindy 'Lizbeth
Brown.

I got acquainted with her when her folks moved out fr'm
town

An' bought the old Hank Smith place fr'm the widder—
Hank wuz dead;
It 'uz mortgaged, but they paid so much she come out
'way ahead.

I made eyes at Malindy f'r a year er two, I 'low,
An' still we wuzn't gittin' on so very peart; somehow
The things 'at I 'ud think uv as a-bein' good to say,
They'd slip out fr'm m' mind, y' see, an' jist git clean away!
Know'd what I ort to tell 'er, but I didn't have the sand
Until one night, b' gosh, I up an' squuz Malindy's hand!

My feelin's, when I done it, fust wuz skeer, an' then,
su'prise;

I 'low'd perhaps she'd slap me, er rebuke me 'ith her eyes.
One is jist as bad as t'other is, f'r when a man's in love
His sweetheart is as sacred as the angels up above;
An' he'd ruther die than feel he'd been too fast er fresh,
'ith her,

Er indulged in demonstrations that she wuzn't willin' fer.
Child, if you have got a feller an' his love is right an' pure,
He won't expect no huggin' n'r no kissin' till he's sure
That y'r heart is wholly his'n; an' that's why I felt so
grand—

I knowed Malindy lov'd me when she let me squeeze 'er hand!

'Cause she didn't do no fussin', didn't frown n'r pull away,
But I felt a little answerin' pressure there, as if to say
That she keered fer me a little an' would gladly make it
more—

Jist about that time we heerd her maw a-comin' to'rds
the door,

An' although when she come in us two wuz settin' wide
apart

I wuz feelin' mighty comf'able an' warm inside my heart;
An' her maw 'lowed that Malindy hadn't been well fer a
week,

An' it 'peared as if the fever wuz a-showin' in her cheek;
But we made no explanations an' she couldn't understand
That Malindy wuz jist blushin' up because I'd squuz her
hand!

I rode my old hoss, Charlie, an' as we went home that
night

The whole big earth seemed made anew an' draped in
golden light!

Ol' Charlie seemed to me he wuz that ancient steed 'ith
wings,

That poets rides on when they want to think poetic things;

An' Sancho, when he come to meet me, trottin' down the
road,

He wuzn't like no common dog—it seemed that he had
growed

To a monst'ous winged lion, them that looks so fine an'
great,

Like some rich folks in the city has a-settin' by the'r gate;
An' happiness an' music seemed a-floodin' all the land
An' a-singin' halleluyer 'cause I'd squuz Melindy's hand !

I snooped in through the kitchen door an' clum' upstairs
to bed,

But a single thought o' sleepin' never entered in my head;
I laid there till plum' daylight jist a-thinkin' o' my girl,
'Ith my heart all uv a flutter an' my head all in a whirl!
I heerd Paw snorin' down below—it us't to git me riled,
But that night it seemed he snored a toon o' music sweet
an' mild.

The feelin' that 'uz in me jist made all my senses sing,
Creatin' chords an' choruses an' scngs in ev'rything!
Wuz toons enough inside o' me to make a hull brass band;
I 'uz jist a livin' orchestra—I'd squuz Melindy's hand!

Malindy? She's been dead, my child, fer over twenty year;
I'm a-thinkin' uv her often, but I can't wish she wuz here;
She's playin' on a harp, I know, 'ith angels up above,
Wher' shadders never darkens things, but all is peace an'
love.

Soon I'll sing them songs o' Zion in the home o' ransom'd
souls,

Wher' the tree uv life is bloomin' an' the livin' waters
rolls;

Wher' the chosen ones is getherin' aroun' the'r Master's
throne,

An' we'll reco'nize our loved ones an' shall know as we are
known;

But it seems the greatest pleasure when I cross the shinin'
strand

'Ill be to meet Malindy there an' onc't more squeeze 'er
hand!

DON'T WANT NO CROWN.

I've hearn the faithful servants uv the Lord,
That's al'ays 'round explainin' uv His word,
Say if we does our dooty good an' brown
We're heirs appearant to a starry crown.
But heaven al'ays seemed to me a place
Wher' sich distinctions wuzn't in the race;
Wher' ev'ry one wuz treated level fair
An' each wuz good as any that wuz there,
An' wouldn't feel at home to strut aroun'
Wearin' a crown !

A place wher' all the women-folks at church
Don't try to leave each other in the lurch
By stackin' decorations on the'r head,
'Ith plumes enough to make a feather bed.
'Ith birds an' beasts an' reptiles—livin' things
That's slaughtered fer the'r feet an' tails an' wings.
A place wher' all the folks is middlin' rich,
But don't wear studs an' di'mond rings an' sich.
I've al'ays 'lowed the saved in Zion's town
Don't need no crown !

Imagine, now, Miss Allie Agnew told
That Susie Tidmore's crown wuz not pure gold;
Or said, with more uv truth an' less uv taste:
"Them jewels in the upper works is paste!"
She'd haf' to spread her wings without delay
Or mingle in most unangelic fray!
Shall heaven's greatest blessings still appear
The vanities which most beset us here?
I don't believe a saint wuz ever foun'
Wearin' a crown!

I've al'ays 'lowed a harp 'uz jist the thing
To he'p the music when the angels sing;
An' when the washed an' saved an' ransomed throng
Strikes up an' hits the chorus good an' strong,
A-joinin' in tremenjus sweet accord
The'r anthem song uv glory to the Lord,
I reckon that the saints 'll all be there
An' pourin' out the'r voices on the air;
An' I, fer one, ain't goin' to sneak aroun'
Huntin' no crown!

WHERE I WOULD SHINE.

Abou Ben Adhem wuz a Eastern gent
Onct met a angel that the Lord had sent
To take a census uv the folks on earth—
How much they loved Him, what the'r love 'uz worth.
He found Abou's abode an' struck a light
An' woke 'im up in bed one summer night
To ast 'im if he loved the Lord; an' then
Because Abe said he loved 'is feller men,
He give 'im an immense approvin' look
An' put 'is name down in a yellor book,
Statin' that Abe wuz jist the proper stuff
An' that he loved the Lord fer sure enough.

I'd like to git my name writ up on high
As fitten fer a mansion in the sky.
'Pears like I do the very best I can
Tow'rds learnin' fer to love my feller man.
But phaw! it don't appear no use, an' then
I'm no great shakes to honey 'round the men,

Nohow. It strikes me clearly, furthermore,
I'll never shine upon the heavenly shore
Unless they fix a standard much more human
An' let in them that loves the'r feller WOMAN.
An' then, jist let Saint Peter loose the wicket,
I'd scoot in at the head uv all the ticket!

THE SAD FATE OF JIMMY.

He was weight and power, he was courage and vim—

The leader, the life of the game;

The fellows had styled him "Football Jim,"

And proudly he bore the name.

When Jim led on in the center rush,

Defying danger and death,

Applause was stilled in admiring hush

While the spectators held their breath!

Oh, the blood that sings in its conscious might

The song of the strength of man!

That nerves our hearts for the thickest fight—

No place but the front—the van!

Oh muscles of iron and heart of fire!

Oh nerves that are wrought of steel—

Electric heralds of vocal wire

That shout of the strength we feel!

But who has shaken our tower of might?

Has death, relentless and grim,

Struck home in the heat of the manful fight

And silenced the heart of Jim?

Oh, angels! witness the tears we shed

O'er the brave, the true, the good!

For Football Jimmy has just dropped dead—

Maw asked him to cut some wood!

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT SUPREME.

The's a heap uv arrangements the wimmen can make
To fasten a feller's regard
So's it gives him a fit when they hand him the shake
An' let him down suddent an' hard.
The spell o' the'r beauty's a powerful charm
To make him a pris'ner fer life,
Er leastways to think he's the victim uv harm
If he doesn't git spliced to a wife.

But paintin' complexions an' curlin' uv hair
Ain't all that they is to be done,
N'r struttin' around 'ith a dignified air
N'r dancin' an' soshul-like fun.
The's one sure contraption a woman can play
That beats the most beautified look
An' larrups it over all words she c'd say—
It's provin' she knows how to cook!

A-playin' pianners is sump'm' that's fine—
This music's a wonderful art
To cheer up y'r soul when y' kinder repine
An feel sorter pale 'round the heart.
But it beats Paddy Rewski as' holler as air
An' all the pianners in town
When y' show me some sossage that's seasoned 'ith care
An' biskits—that's jist the right brown.

A well-biled p'tater is more than a song
Though it goes to a different place;
An' a nice custard puddin' 'll he'p things along
When a feller's a-feedin' his face.
Go 'way 'ith y'r female ca-doin's in art
Er wimmen that's wise as a book—
When y'r lookin' fer sump'm' to warm up my heart
Go rustle a gal that c'n cook !

RURAL POLITICS.

I've hearn 'em say our gov'ment system's bad as all creation
An' the only hope that's left 'em is us rooral population,
To purify the pollyticks an' rectify the nation.

They 'low we live 'ith nacher out beneath the sun an' skies
An' native truth an' honesty we most devoutly prize
An' scorn the tricks uv pollyticks that call fer tellin' lies.

It's plain enough to me the man who started that report
Wuz never made a candidate fer judge o' probate court
N'r watched some rooral pollytician undermine his fort.

He never spent the market price o' forty head uv shoats
To 'leviate financial straits uv neighbors who had votes,
N'r lost the savin's uv a life endorsin' people's notes.

He never traded township votes 'ith Deacon Stubblefield
To git his own convention boat a little stronger keeled,
Then paid ten dollars to the church to git his conscience
healed.

Perhaps he paid enormous bills fer drinks, cigars an' feed
F'r dellygates frum up the pike who threatened to secede
An' stagger his convention plans by startin' a stampede.

He never loaned his farmin' tools fer twenty miles around,
An' dassent advertise fer them that never could be found,
But let 'em go as free as if he wuz in dooty bound.

He never stopped to think that human nacher's much the
same

An' lingers not fer scruples when a office is the aim
Whether city folks er country folks is playin' at the game.

An' when I hear 'em tellin' uv the pollyticks that's pure
An' sterlin' rooral honesty that al'ays will endoor—
I hope they're right, but somehow seems I can't feel quite
so sure!

THE FELLER THAT'S ON TO HIS GAME.

The world may reckon uv human affairs
In a keerless, permiscuous way,
An' don't stand around jist a-splittin' uv hairs
Fer to give exact change in y'r pay.
But y'll gen'ally find, as Time's penjulum swings,
That it hands out its wealth an' its fame
An' a big bunch uv other exceedin' good things
To the feller that's on to his game.

If you 'uz a hoss-jockey ridin' a race
The fastness is what you 'ud need—
Ain't no fancy cloe's n'r no yaller gilt lace
'At counts like a little more speed !
An' the thing to make y'r stock go higher
When the judges call out y'r name
Is to be the fust one under the wire—
The feller that's on to his game.

An' if you 'uz a carpenter buildin' a shack,
Y' must put her right up to stay;
Don't saw y'r boards crooked n'r nail 'em slack
In no wiggle-y, wobble-y way.

They ain't no show fer a man to shirk
 'Ithout he gits some o' the blame,
N'r git full pay fer no shabby work—
 He'd ort to be on to his game.

Er if you 'uz a lawyer a-pleadin' a case,
 No matter jist what the offense,
You might put in at 'most every place
 On the law an' the evidence;
But y' want the joory to come your way;
 The verdict is your greatest aim;
An' if y' don't git it the folks 'll say
 That you wuzn't on to y'r game.

An' if you 'uz a young feller wantin' to wed,
 Don't court the gal's folks---oh no!
'Tain't what her lovin' relations 'd said,
 But jist what she says, that 'd go.
Her paw an' maw both c'd think you 'uz all right,
 But that wouldn't strengthen your claim
If she 'loped 'ith another feller some night—
 Some feller that's on to his game !

US COMMON FOLKS.

It sometimes happens now an' then
In countin' up y'r hefty men,
That common people sich as us
Who ain't a-raisin' no big fuss
 N'r smudgin' smokes;
But sort o' al'ays rub along
An' tend our work and sing our song,
Well, seems the papers cuts us out;
Leastways, y' can't read much about
 Us common folks.

It's a Major This or Colonel That,
'Ith orstrich feathers on the'r hat
An' uniforms that looks as swell
As porters in some big hotel—
 They gits the praise.
An' us that marches in the ranks—
We don't expect reward n'r thanks;
We're not considered in the shove—
The grandee bunch is high above
 Our common ways.

I take the Daily Pop'lar Voice—
Jist haft to do it—'tain't my choice
Uv pollyticks er social views,
But it pertends to give the news.

Them fellers pokes

It jammin' full o' tommyrot
An' has a column every shot
'Bout Princess Tootum's Royal Nibs,
An' we come in f'r two-line squibs

Us common folks!

When rich folks has th'r big soy-rees
Er if the'r lap-dog takes a sneeze;
If Guv'nor Jones plays pongy ping
Er buys his gal a di'mond ring

Er hugs his wife;

They git a column and a half
An' have it sent by tellygraph
An' hash it up f'r sev'ral days
So's we'll improve our common ways

An' common life

It al'ays kind o' seemed to me
You couldn't paddie 'crost the sea
'Ithout a bottom in y'r tub;
An' jist a felly, tire an' hub,
 'Ithout no spokes,
Don't make no extry wagon-wheel!
But gosh! They act an' seem to feel
As if the' wa'n't a livin' doubt
The world could git along 'ithout
 Us common folks!

We ain't a-tearin' uv our shirt
N'r pawin' up a cloud o' dirt,
But folks c' high er low estate
That comes around our door er gate
 Don't git no snub;
We don't scrooch up our backs an' say
That it's our pow'ful busy day;
We'll feed 'em if the' ain't so grand
That the'r digestion couldn't stand
 Our common grub.

But when the hull is said and done
I guess we've had our sheer o' fun
If not o' glory, duds an' gold.
I al'ays think o' one uv ol'

Abe Linkern's jokes:

That common scrubs like you an' me
Was certainly way up in "G"
An' fust in God A'mighty's love
Er He'd not made so many uv
Us common folks!

THESE BALKY WIMMEN.

We us't to have a ol' bay mare,
Whose Christian'd name wuz Moll;
She tuck the premium at the fair,
A-standin' in 'er stall.
The judges never tuck 'er out
To drive, er pull, er walk,
An' if they had the' ain't a doubt
But she'd fly up an' balk.

But in the slick an' purty class
Paw knowed wher' she wuz at;
On corn, er hay, er oats, er grass,
She'd keep jist rollin' fat.
All vittles tasted good to her—
Her appetite wuz fine;
But would she pull a load? No sir!
That wuzn't in 'er line.

Some Sundays, though, Paw'd hitch 'er in
An' start to Sunday school;
Maw'd tell 'im plain: "She'll make you sin!
You better take a mule!"

But pshaw! us men don't like advice
An' never in 'is life
Could Paw convince 'imself 'twuz nice
To take it frum 'is wife.

The mare'd start (if she wanted to)
'Ith lots o' prance an' style,
An' gee! the travelin' she'd do
Fer mebbly half a mile!
Y'd think the man that owned that mare
Jist had a winnin' cinch;
Then all at once she'd stop right there
An' wouldn't budge an inch!

She wouldn't go fer lickin' 'er
N'r coixin' 'er 'ith hay;
The time Paw spent in kickin' 'er
Wuz that much throwed away.
It al'ays ended like Maw 'lowed:
"You take ol' Bet, the mule;
You may not feel so all-fired proud,
But won't quite BE a fool!

My son, be keerful wher' y' go
In lookin' fer a wife;
It's double-harness work, y' know,
A-pullin' on through life.
Uv course the wimmen ain't as strong,
But that's no good excuse
Why they should al'ays poke along
'Ith stay-chains floppin' loose.

This highfalutin' pot-house plant
You say has "got y'r heart"—
It ain't a question can er can't,
But WILL she do her part?
The's some things in a pusson's life
That love don't change a bit,
An' when y' go to pick a wife
Y' want "git up an' git."

Y' seem to think the country girls
Ain't quite up to y'r style,
An' that y'r powder, paint and curls
An' little clock-work smile,

The culcher, an' the play an' sing,
The varnish an' the shine
Is jist the hull an' entire thing—
It's nothin' but th' rin'!

An' when y're pluggin' on through life
An' strike some gummy places,
The's nothin' like a willin' wife
That tightens up her traces.
These balky wimmen, when they see
A load o' toil an' care,
Jist set back on the single-tree,
Er snort and pitch an' r'ar.

Good-lookin' wimmen ain't no sin—
I've got no quarrel 'ith beauty,
But I don't want 'em fer my kin
'Ithout they know the'r dooty!
Y' want to git one like y'r Maw,
That's right up to the chalk;
The meanest thing I ever saw
'Uz a woman that'd balk!

AT DISTRICT THIRTY-ONE.

TO R. R. NELSON, SR.

The's a heap o' great occasions in a feller's early years,
But as I think the list all up the biggest ones appears
To been them literary nights at District Thirty-One,
Debatin' which wuz usefulest, the plowshare er the gun.
The eloquence developed in that wonderful debate
Wuz enough to build a bran'-new constitution fer the state;
An' the pieces that wuz spoke there by us country boys
an' girls

Wuz the polished gems o' genius—thoughts that shone
like reg'lar pearls!

“At midnight in 'is guarded tent the Turk lay dreamin' uv
the hour!”

Wuz al'ays spoke by Trumann Cales, who had a voice of
monst'ous power;

If any Turk wuz dreamin' in 'is little trun'le bed,
Bet y' Trumann's voice 'ud waked 'im—it 'ud almost wake
the dead!

Then we all wuz jist as quiet an' attentive as a mouse

While the teacher told uv chargin' that wuz worse than
Harvey House;

I think it wuz the charges that some British fellers made—
About six hundr'd uv 'em 'at they called the Light Brigade.

Some youthful little sprig that hadn't growed so very far
'Ud tell 'em 'bout the twinkle uv the twinklin' little star.
An' we listened 'ith attention while Miss Lou Arloah Peck
Told about the little boy that stood there on the burnin'
deck.

When the fire department people saw they couldn't save
the ship,

An' they hollered to the skippers jist to grab the'r trunks
an' skip,

W'y this blamed bull-headed young 'un stood there 'ith 'is
little gun,

A-bawlin' "Father! Father! Say if yet my task is done!"

Ed Marling us't to sing us all a mighty purty song
'Bout the wickedness uv drinkin', an' the foolishness an'
wrong;

How its only earthly mission wuz to p'izen an' destroy
An' to drag down to destruction ev'ry mother's darlin' boy.

An' Clinton Conrad 'ud put in his little funny snatch
An tell 'em wher' it wuz the women couldn't strike a match;
It'd al'ays bring the house down when ol' Clint 'ud up an'
say

That the reason that they couldn't wuz they wuzn't built
that way!

An' then Miss Idy Walker, she 'ud make us want to pray,
By tellin' that ol' story 'bout the Death-Bridge o' th' Tay.
Remember that, I reckon—wher' the feller saved his life
By lettin' a gal hug him that 'uz goin' t' be his wife?
What double luck—t' have a purty gal hung on y'r neck
F'r a sort o' charm t' save y' from a blasted railroad
wreck!

An' Idy, though she never got to be so widely known,
Was a poet, an' sometimes she'd read us verses uv her
own.

Then a feller had a raving that would set above his door
An' awful slow an' solemn like, 'd tell him "Nevermore!"
That's about the queerest, oddest poultry story! On my
word

I'd 'a' got plum' out o' patience 'ith sich doin's fr'm a bird!

I'll bet I'd grabbed him by the neck an' slung him through
the door

'Ith his tappin', tappin', tappin', an' his pesky "Never-
more!"

I got a lively sprinkle-in' of temper fr'm my dad
An' don't like dog-gone foolishness, espesh'ly when I'm
mad.

But the Future pulls us forrard an' the past shoves at our
back

An' the Present slips beneath us like a gol-durned rail-
road track

When the engine's coughin' up a perfect stream o' snorts
an' snuffs

An' a lightnin' calculator couldn't wink between the puffs.
You c'n recollect we figgered out a very worthy aim—
Wuz to cut some piles uv ice upon the grand canal o' fame?
We're youngsters still—perhaps—but pshaw! the world
contains no fun

That beats them literary nights at District Thirty-one.

BILL'S WAY O' BEIN' BEST MAN.

He 'uz jist the outdoimest, beatin'est boy,
I reckon, that ever the' wuz;
He c'd dress, talk an' think 'ith a way uv his own
That 'uz never like other folks does.
He 'uz sometimes successful an' sometimes he'd fail,
Though he al'ays 'ud try 'ith a will,
But up-comes n'r down-falls n'r nothin' y'd fix
C'd ruffle the ca'mness uv Bill.

In breakin' a stump-lot er trainin' a colt
Er teachin' a new calf to drink,
He 'uz al'ays right there 'ith persistence an' grit—
Lots more 'n a feller 'ud think.
But he got his self-confidence summut shook up,
An' it 'most tuck him down fer a spell,
When he gethered a notion and follered it off
That he could git married to Nell.

Nell 'uz never so blamed highfalutin' as some,
But as smart as a whip, an' plum' neat;
An' she'd went to the high school fer two year er more,
Down to Center, the Clay county seat.
She worked fer her board 'ith a fam'ly down there—
Some feller that clerks in a store;
An' she tuck the fust prize o' the hull shootin'-match
In the class uv Eighteen Ninety-Four.

Bill talked to the gal in a plain, friendly style
(He'd knowed 'er fer all uv his life)
An' told 'er how proud he 'ud be if she'd say
He could nominate her fer his wife.
The' wuz lots o' the gals in this township, I guess,
That 'uz ready to jump at the chance,
But Nell had idee-uls, as some people say,
An' a head full o' this here romance!

Expected a poet, er mebbly a prince,
That 'ud come 'ith a big recommend,
An' somehow she couldn't git spoony to'rds Bill—
It 'uz too much like sp'ilin' a friend.

They'd know'd one another fr'm childhood. y' see,
When they wuzn't knee high to a duck,
An' Nell had a notion by waitin' a spell
She 'ud happen to lots bigger luck.

She let Bill down easy, but give him to know
That his chances 'ith her 'uz plum' slim;
But admitted she liked him, an' 'lowed that she'd be
An out-an'-out sister to him.
Bill soaked it all up an' he thanked her right peart,
And ast her consent to his plan
That whenever her weddin' should happen along,
He, Bill, wuz to be the best man.

Nell 'lowed that the job o' selectin' best man
'Uz one that the groom ort to fill,
But agreed to insist that they'd have it that way
An' give the position to Bill.
An' so the thing drifted an' drifted along,
Easy like, an' the years come an' went,
But the folks that had looked fer Nell's weddin' to be
Failed to witness that scrumpchous event.

She wuz one time engaged to Harve Smith, fr'm the Point,
An' wuz goin' to marry him till
Fer some reason nobody ever explained .
He tuck a dislikin' fer Bill.
So she stood up an' told him flat-footed an' plain,
As decided as women-folks can,
That whenever she married, Bill Sniggs 'd be there,
An' moreover, he'd be the best man.

That split it all up, an' the next 'un wuz Hale
Who'd come there to Fairview to preach;
He could pour out y'r eloquence world 'ithout end—
Them soul-flights that Bill couldn't reach.
He told her this sisterly love fer Bill Sniggs
Wuz entirely unproper an' wrong;
An' she—well, she told 'im a plenty, I guess,
Fer he didn't hold out very long.

There wuz Lufkins, the doctor, who wanted her bad,
An' she'd kinder agreed to that plan
Till the question come up an' she ast him to choose
Bill Sniggs fer to be the best man.

That brought on some fussin' an' Nell up an' said
That men wuz contrary as sin,
An' a woman who'd marry one might understand
She 'uz fixin' to jist git tuck in.

Well, Bill had been workin' as peart as y' please
An' raisin' a crop ev'ry year,
But he'd never spliced up, an' the folks wondered why,
As the cause didn't 'zactly appear.
The young ladies joshed him an' older ones said
That Bill 'uz a-wastin' his prime,
But the course uv events soon established the fact
That he 'uz jist 'bidin' his time.

He drove up one day in a big load o' corn,
Ketchin' Nell in her ev'ry-day gown,
An' ast her, jist in a plain, sociable way,
If she wouldn't drive over to town.
She clum' on the wagon—that's Nell's way, y' know,
Al'ays up to a frolic er ride—
An' I don't guess she dreamed at that moment that she
'Ud come back a new-married bride.

Well, say! don't suppose y'll believe it at all,
But they went to the court house that day,
Bought a new pair o' license an' put up the squire
To marry 'em jist right away!
Didn't take much persuasion, I reckon y' know,
Fer a squire never feels half as nice
As when rammin' that two dollars down in his jeans
That he taxes fer tyin' a splice.

It riz an excitement, you better believe,
As a weddin' su'prise only can,
An' it's come to a proverb the hull country through,
'Bout Bill's way o' bein' best man.
Uv course, we'd all knowed it the hull blessed time—
We c'd prophesy, then, fit to kill;
But I think that uv people that reely had knowed,
They 'uz only jist one—that 'uz Bill!

THE COURTSHIP OF JACOB.

We read, in holy scripiter, 'bout the second hemisphere,
Uv a man who held one job as hired hand fer fourteen year;
An' if such a thing 'd happen in our county it'd seem
Like the evanescent shadder uv a story-teller's dream.
But they say that when he dies a pilgrim sinner's got no
show

If he don't believe the scripiter, so the story has to go.
Y' see, this feller Jacob 'uz in love 'ith Laban's girl,
An' he thought, like all young goslin's, he'd tried married
life a whirl;

I admire his blamed persistence, spendin' fourteen years
o' life

Workin' jist to git this cne p'tic'lar lady fer 'is wife.

Them days y' couldn't court the gal till after you 'uz wed,
An' so Jake saw Pappy Laban, an' the mean ol' scoundrel
said:

"Here, now—if you want to tie up to my gal I love so dear,
Y' must sign a written contract, fust, to work here seven
year!

It sorely grieves my heart to think o' lettin' Rachel go
An' I wouldn't dream o' doin' it except fer you, y' know.
She's the smoothest hand to milk a cow fer forty miles
around,

An' the beat o' Rachel's batter cakes jist never has been
found;

But shuck y'r coat an' git to work, an' don't y' never hope
To run no blamed shennegan an' git 'er to elope!"

So they went an' signed a contract 'fore a justice o' the
peace—

How that Jacob wuz to work fer seven year 'ithout release,
Then Laban wuz to give the happy pair a little stake
An' Rachel would become the cooin', lovin' wife o' Jake.
To Jacob's faithful heart the seven year wa'n't very long;
He'd think about his Rachel an' he'd sing a little song;
He'd let on like his weddin' day 'uz comin' purty soon
An' imagine he wuz startin' on a four weeks' honeymoon.
He kep' up his little whistle, jist as merry as a bird,
An' no one ever heard him speak a discontented word!

He herded Laban's cattle an' he helped to mow the grass,
He trimmed his old hedge fences an' hoed out the garden
 sass;

He'd go to ketch the horses at a quarter after four
An' draw three bar'ls o' water up, an' purty often more.
He'd feed the caives an' slop the hogs an' forty other tricks
An' be ready fer his breakfast at the stroke o' half past
 six.

Then he'd drink a cup o' cawfy an' jist eat a little mite,
'Cause the very sights o' Rachel took away his appetite;
An' he'd work jist like the future uv the unrepentin'
 sinner

Till they hung a dish towel on the barn to flag him home
 to dinner.

Now, accordin' to the scripiter, Laban had another girl,
Whose hair wuz like the sunshine an' her teeth wuz like
 a pearl;

Her hair wuz like the sunshine very often is at night—
Conspicuously absent—an' her head wuz jist a fright.
Though her paw owned lots o' cattle an' wuz counted good
 an' rich,

He 'uz jist too all-fired stingy to procure the gal a switch!

I said her teeth wuz like a pearl, an' that 'uz reely so,
But she'd lost 'em in a accident 'bout thirty year ago.
She wuz jist a last year's wall-flower, but her people wuz
afraid,
Fer her temper's sake, to tell the truth an' call her an ol'
maid.

She wuz no blue-ribbon beauty, but a schemer mighty slick;
An' she put up Pappy Laban to a most ungodly trick.
They bought a quart o' licker an' got Jacob b'ilin' drunk,
Then this gal put her shoes an' stockin's underneath his
bunk,
An' when he sobered up next day her paw an' her both
swore
That th'd been a little weddin' there about a day before,
An' he'd promised to defend, pertect an' cherish her-fer
life,
An' she'd at last consented to become his darlin' wife.
An' Jacob thought what many a pore feller's had to
think:
"I'd give forty thousand shekels if I hadn't took that
drink!"

He went an' saw a lawyer an' applied fer a divorce,
But they filed the'r counter pleadin' an' he lost the case,
uv course.

So he took another seven years o' trimmin' Laban's hedge,
But you bet y'r grandma's pension that he signed the
temp'rance pledge!

So it happened that he worked fer fourteen year on
Laban's farm

'Fore he got to measure Rachel's big-aroundness 'ith 'is
arm.

But it seems that matrimony in them days wuz not a snap—
Seven years to git a marriage license frum y'r sweet-
heart's pap!

OUR CORPORATION EXPERIENCE.

If y' had a gen'ral rubbish heap fer all the useless things
That's accumulatin' 'round in all the earth,
All the broken-down contraptions an' the airships 'ithout
wings,

That has cost a thousand times what they wuz worth;
The' would be a monst'ous jag o' old machinery an' sich
In which big an' grand success once seemed to lurk,
But the uselessest an' least account fer makin' people rich
Is the corporation scheme that failed to work.

The's the patent foldin' bath-tub fer the sailors on the sea—
They could use it fer a life-boat er a bath;

An' a cyclone-terrorizer that would make the varmint flee
If it chanced to be a-driftin' on y'r path.

The's the 'commodatin' 'larm clock that'd go an' start the
fire,

Grind the coffee, chop the hash an' beat the steak,
An' then with modest kindness it 'ud gently pull a wire
An' suggest that you perhaps had better wake.

The's the books that folks has written on a-governin' a wife,
An' a-makin' home a bloomin' Paradise;
The plans to make a glass eye jist as good as nacher'l life,
An' other things that sounded quite as nice.
The's the plan to turn the colored folks as white as bran'
new snow,
An' the plan to go an' civilize the Turk;
But the pitifullest one of all the schemes that failed
to go
Wuz our corporation scheme that didn't work.

The's the million dollars common stock an' twice as much
preferred,
An' five hundr'd thousand bonds at six per cent;
The' wuz plans fer bigger dividends than ever you had
heard
About, as soon as we could market our cement.
We sold the bottom eighty and the east side pasture lot
An' mortgaged up the home place some, besides;
An' the idee that our plans 'ud mebby go an' mebby
not
Never penetrated through our pesky hides.

Then ol' Lawyer Puffs, frum Center, said he'd steer as
through the fog

Uv corporation law an' mystery,
An' as we 'uz friends o' his'n an' he wuzn't any hog
He'd accept five hundred dollars as a fee.
An' Bilkerson, the editor uv Center's Pop'lar Voice,
Said the way to git before the people's eyes
Wuz to buy a full position space (he let us have our choice)
An' it cost us quite a bit to advertise.

He made a special local rate uv 'leven cents a line
An' puffed us editor'ally to boot;
An' called our proposition "extraordinary fine,"
Fer he always wuz a flatterin' galoot.
Then a printer frum Saint Looney come an' showed us how
to do—
Said we'd have to git some corporation books
An' a lot o' stock suttficuts all shinin' spankin' new
So's the folks 'ud be attracted by the'r looks.

He explained how they wuz cheaper all the time the more
y' got,
An' showed us what he said 'uz proper style;

He had got in half a car load uv a very special lot
An' he let us have 'em cheap to take the pile.
I went up to Chicago jist to see how I would feel
Associatin' 'round 'ith all the swells,
An' to make myself right solid bought a red autommybeel
'Ith six noises an' a half a dozen smells.

I met a dashin' feller of the real exclusive set,
Who treated me the nicest, ev'ry way,
An' took me to the place wher' all the capitalists met—
I think it wuz the Royal Herd Caffay.
He organized a banquet uv a hundred folks er more,
An' o' course I told him not to spare expense;
An' in the round uv speakin' w'y y' know I took the floor
An' the interest they showed wuz jist immense.

They c'd see our corporation wuz uncommon wisely plan'd
An' would pay a most enormous big per cent,
An' if they 'd had a cent uv ready money right at hand
'Ud been more than glad to buy Preferred Cement.
Course they viewed it jist as we did, 'ith the profits plain
in sight,

“Most lucrative investment in the West;”
An’ they told me if the money market hadn’t been so tight
They could go an’ borrow millions to invest.

I got oodles uv encouragement, but hadn’t sold no stock
When it turned up that the money all wuz gone;
I received the bankers’ message an’ it give me quite a
shock—

“You’re eleven hundred dollars overdrawn!”
I packed my little grip-sack an’ come home the shortest
way;

(Y’ c’n jist imagine how that made me feel!)
I ’uz bu’sted, but I fixed it ’ith the bankin’ folks next day
An’ let ’em have—that thing that ends ’ith “beel.”

I took them stock suddiffcuts an’ piled ’em in the yard
(If I didn’t I’m a hog-thief an’ a liar!)

An’ after sayin’ grace on ’em by cussin’ good an’ hard
I set the whole infernal bunch afire.

I reckon that one lesson in financin’ is enough

When y’ come to y’r rope’s end ’ith sich a jerk;
Yes, I bit off one big mouthful that wuz mighty all-fired
tough—

Durn a corporation scheme that fails to work!

DECREE BY AGREEMENT.

The' aint no calculatin' on what women-folks 'll do
N'r of tellin' what the critters' goin' to say ;
The only thing that's certain, jist between myself an' you,
Is, they're middlin' sure to up an' have the'r way.
An' I reckon every feller that has married one f'r life,
If he'd take a bible oath to tell it straight,
Thinks he's got the beatin'est in all creation f'r a wife,
An' has found a boss instid uv runnin' mate.

But it makes a heap o' difference how the governin' is done,
How she makes y' bristle up an' do y'r part;
Y' c'n work f'r some an' never know but what it's really
fun
An the's never no resistance in y'r heart.
Then the's others makes y' feel as if they's queen of all
the earth,
An' you wuz jist a working f'r y'r board,
An' that wuz really more than what y'r services wuz
worth,
Er that they c'd economic'ly afford.

I reckon that to serve 'em is our worldly end an' aim,
The cause f'r which us men folks all wuz made;
But it seems we ort to have a larger say-so in the
game,

An' to make a bigger showin' on parade.
A great big load won't hurt a horse n'r git his shoulders
sore

If his collar's made to fit him good an' tight,
An' a man 'll pull enormous sights an' wish that he had
more

If the woman's got him hitched exactly right.

That makes me think o' Bill ag'in—Bill Sniggs, y' know,
an' Nell;

Bill had the neatest farm in twenty mile.
They married off an' started in to git along right well,
An' succeeded like a top f'r quite a while.
But skimmin' milk an' suds in' clo'es an' workin' soon an'
late

An' cookin' f'r a bunch o' hired hands,
It keeps a woman jumpin' at a purty rapid gait,
An' the more she makes, the more her work expands.

Nell raised a sight o' chickens an' Bill raised a heap o'
grain

An' an the'r minds an' hands wuz busy gittin' rich;
So the logical production uv this work an' pull an'
strain

Wuz in nerves an' tempers, skirmishes an' sich,
They each was more than willin' f'r to do the'r sheer o'
work,

But wuz sorter stiff an' stubborn in the'r heart;
The confessin' an' forgivin' wuz a job they both 'd shirk
An' neither one wuz keen to do the'r part.

The friction kep' developin' till after bye an' bye

Each meal 'd bring about a lively fuss,
An' Nell 'd treat her feelin's to a half-an-hour o' cry
An' Bill 'd git behind the barn an' cuss.

They concluded they had been tuck in, an' both of 'em
believed

That separatin' wuz the only course;
So admittin' that they each of 'em wuz more or less
deceived,

They agreed that they 'd apply f'r a divorce.

They bundled up an' drove to ol' Squire Higginbotham's
place

An' told him what they wanted fer to do;

I tell y' they wuz lookin' mighty sheepish in the face,

An' the Squire—well, he wuz lookin' sheepish, too.

The Squire, y' see, it happened he had married Bill an'
Nell

An' he thought they wuz lovin' as could be;

An' this thing come so suddent that it tuck him back a
spell,

But he told 'em then, he told 'em—"Well!" says he;

"It sorter puts me out to think that you sh'd want release

An' sh'd come around a-astin' a divorce,

But I'm here to do my duty as a justice uv the peace

An' I've got to let y' have the thing, uv course!

Thank god the' ain't no children fer to mix up in the
scrap,

Er to feel the dretful shame an' the disgrace,

Fer to give 'em to the'r mother er to send 'em 'ith the'r
pap

Is a question that I wouldn't keer to face.

"I'll write it out: This seventh day of April, Nineteen
Three,

Come before me William Sniggs an' Nell, his wife,
Representin' to this court that they can't nevermore agree
An' a-wishin' now to separate fer life;
So by virchew uv the statoots that air bindin' an' in
force,

An' desirin' that the'r bickerin' shall cease,
An' as I'm the one that married 'em, I grant 'em a
divorce.

"JULIUS HIGGINBOTHAM,

"Justice of the Peace."

Of course, the'r little property, it didn't make 'em rich,
But they talked about it on the'r homeward ride;
Three horses, thirteen head o' cows, the furniture an' sich,
A-figgerin' on how they would divide.

Nell 'lowed she'd take the drivin' horse an' Bill c'd keep
the span,

An' farmin' tools—she didn't need a one;
She couldn't be a-takin' keer o' them things, like a man,
An' she had no use fer 'em beneath the sun.

She'd take her parlor organ home, fer Bill, he couldn't
play,

An' it mebbey 'ud be company fer her;

She reckoned she'd be lonesome, now, 'ith him so fur
away,

An' she'd think uv him, whatever might occur.

She packed her trunk an' showed him wher' to find his
things, y' know,

An' gethered up her grit to say good-bye,

But sump'm' sort o' helt her so's she couldn't start
to go,

An' she lit in fer a most enormous cry.

An' Bill—I couldn't tell y' jist exactly what he'd weigh,

He's jist a fraction under six feet tall—

But it seemin' the' wuz nothin' in p'ticular to say,

He simply started in to he'p her bawl!

They wuzn't wantin' company to witness the'r remorse,

But it proved to be a messenger o' joy

Come down acrost the medder jist a-larrupin' his
horse—

'Twuz the justice o' the peace's little boy.

"Paw sent me down to tell y' that he'd made a big mistake,

Didn't look up all the statoots as he ort;
An' if you folks still wuz stuck on givin' married life the shake

Y' must take y'r pleadin' to the district court!"

* * * *

Says Nell: "Will, air we goin' with 'it to the district court?"

Bill hugged her, but she entered no complaint.

Says he: "W'y after lookin' up the statoots, as I ort,—
Here, kiss me! Le's supposin' that we ain't!"

PLOW-TIME THOUGHTS.

I like to plow—I do, somehow!
I jist can hike along an' sing a little song
 As I goes;
Tune is not so pow'ful fine—lots o' songs ahead o' mine!
 Jist the crows,
Seems like, almost sings as sweet, as they hustle things t' eat
 'Long the rows!
But the music ain't the thing—it's the feelin' makes y' sing
 Does y' good;
Never try to keep it in—it 'ud bust out through my skin
 If I should!
Life's a mighty seeryus thing, an' y' can't jist set an' sing
 On the fence;
Got to plow an' plant an' hoe, er y'r crops ain't goin' t' grow
 Wuth two cents.
But to work an' work along, never smile n'r sing a song,
 Isn't right.
I ain't never goin' t' try, 'n' if I did I couldn't, by
 A durned sight!
Keep on singin', keep up work; lots o' both—don't never
 I like to plow, though, anyhow! [shirk!]

WHEN NANCE SINGS IN THE CHOIR.

The preacher ain't as eloquent as preachers sometimes is,
But that's in his edjication, though, an' ain't no fault uv
his;

He treats a feller's feelin's 'ith a pious disregard,
An' when he lands on sinners, tromps my toes right good
an' nard;

Yit al'ays when I go to church my soul seems h'isted
higher,

An' I reckon that it's all because my Nance sings in the
choir!

Nance ain't been off to Yoorup fer to finish up her voice,
But jist tuck on to singin' uv her own sweet will an' choice;
An' when she swells her chist 'way out an' rolls her big
brown eyes,

Gosh! I c'n read my title clear to mansions in the skies!
An' I fergit the sermon 'bout the torment an' the fird—
I plum' fergit 'most everything but Nancy, in the choir!

If it's "Onward, Christian soldiers, a-marchin' as to war!"
I feel I'd march 'most any place, jist so my Nance wuz
thar!

I think uv Nancy when they sing "Oh, how I long fer
thee!"

An' look at her so wishful when the tune's "Abide 'ith me!"
The' ain't no place in heaven, then, to which my thoughts
aspire—

My heaven's right down here on earth, 'ith Nancy in the
choir!

But when she sings a dooet 'ith that tenor man frum
town,

Gee whizz! My stock o' savin' grace gits awful simmered
down!

They mixes up the'r voices mighty sweet an' lovin' then,
While the rest jines in the chorus or cheeps in a sawft
"aw-men!"

You bet that my religion doesn't quite squarsh out my
ire

N'r preserve the peace 'ithin my soul when Nance sings
in the choir!

LIFE'S EVENTIDE.

The's a heap o' human people that is touchous 'bout th'r age;
Y' ast how long they been on earth it riles th'r righteous
rage!

They hang 'ith teeth an' tce-nails to the coat-tail o' the'r
youth,

An' though on other items they keep middlin' nigh to truth,
When they say how old they air the record-angel in the sky
Goes and writes down on his sin book: "Told a monst'ous
whoppin' lie!"

Seems to 'pear like they'd as lief be in the prison-gang
er hung

As to have the folks a-thinkin' that they ain't exactly
young.

They regard a little wrinkle as a horrible disgrace
An' they pay a man a quarter jist to curry down the'r face!
Ever see 'em? It's the slickest little age-dispellin' dodge—
The barber-folks all practice it; they call the trick "mas-
sodge."

It'll send 'em into spasms jist to find a turnin' hair,
An' they're yankin' 'em an' jerkin' till they're sure the's
no more there.

They will spend ten years declarin' that they jist don't
keer to read—

Ruther do it than own up that spectickles is what they need!

But it seems to me a human is as crazy as a loon
When he tries to turn October uv his life back into June;
Fer I can't see no dishonor in the years that passed y' by,
Jist pervidin' that y've kep' y'r aim an' motter good an' high.
If y' don't commit no errors that's too orful bad an' dark,
Keep y'rself in shoutin' distance o' the Ten-Commandment
mark,

Y' c'n carry in y'r foretop gray-haired evidence uv years
'Ithout findin' no occasion fer these sniffin' grunts an' tears.

As the harvest follers summer an' the mornin' follers night
It's as nacheral as nacher fer y'r hair to turn to white.
Y' must go the way that ev'rything that's mortal has to go:
Spring time, summer time an' autumn; then, the winter
time an' snow.

An' the' ain't a bit o' reason fer to grieve around an' bawl,
Er to try to stop y'r ears up when y' hear the distant call
A-tellin' y' y're wanted wher' the white-robed angels wait,
Er to be jist tied an' drug in through the shinin' pearly gate!

THE REAL CRITERION.

The's a lot o' speculation as to who's the greatest men,
An' what's the biggest deeds that's done, an' how an'
wher' an' when;

But lots o' things is happenin' 'most ev'ry day, I guess,
That ain't writ up in poetry n'r printed in no press.

The's jist one way o' jedgin' 'em that's al'ays good an'
fair—

It's the kind o' folks that people is that makes 'em what
they air!

Ancestors is a handy thing, in fact its nacher's law
That the's no special draw-back in a good ol' paw an' maw;
But the p'int is to remember that the's no onfailin' charms
'Bout y'r great-great-gran'mam's money er her gran'dad's
coat uv arms;

It's in y'r inside make-up, not the fineness uv y'r hair—
It's the kind o' folks that people is that makes 'em what
they air!

The's lots o' men in prison, an' I s'pose the's al'ays been,
Who didn't do the crimes at all fer which they put 'em in.

The's others in the pulpit, too, that preach an' sing an'
pray,

Might be a-puffin' brimstone smoke if Justice had her way;
But in the sweet ol' bye an' bye they'll git the'r proper
share—

It's the kind o' folks that people is that makes 'em what
they air!

A congressman may tell y' lies to git y'r measly vote,
An' a'truthful heart may th'ob beneath a organ-grinder's
coat.

A polished, slick appearance ain't no sure sign uv a man;
Y're jist as apt to find one underneath the skin that's
tan.

An' so the best an' only way's to pick y'r friends 'ith
care—

It's the kind o' folks that people is that makes 'em what
they air !

THE OLD PARLOR ORGAN.

When y' size up the mem'ries uv the distant long ago,
The's a heap o' things a feller holds right dear—
His old gran'daddy's flintlock gun that brought the Injuns
woe,

His gran'mam's spinnin'-wheel an' weavin' gear.
The mossy ol' well bucket has been praised in verse an'
song,

But I'll tell y' what jist lays 'em in the shade;
The thing that I shall treasure most my livin' whole life
long—

It's the parlor organ that my sister played!

It wuz leaky in the bellers an' the safety-valve wuz bad,
It had as'my an' the whoopin' cough an' grip;
But wuz always in the rucus when the's music to be had,
Fer its motter wuz "We won't give up the ship!"
"The Last Sweet Rose o' Summer" an' "When Robins Nest
Again"—

That organ knew 'em like its A B C;

An' Sister slung the knee-swells on an' give it thunder
when

She went to play "My Country, 'Tis of Thee!

I've heerd the grand pipe organs in y'r highfalutin' church,
That rumble, screech an' roar like anything;
But fer me the music-tones that leaves the whole batch
in the lurch

Wuz that organ when my Sister Lill 'ud sing
They ain't a-makin' songs right now than's up to ol' "Ben
Bolt,"

Er "Auld Lang Syne" er "Comin' through the Rye;"
An' if Sister Lill 'uz livin' it 'ud give y'r tears a jolt
To hear her sing "Thou Canst Not Love as I."

Then we us't to gether 'round her in a sort o' little ring
An' sing the hymn-toons that 'uz pop'lar then;

I'd give five dollars now f'r such another good ol' sing—

Yes, I reckon that I'd akchully give ten!

Y' c'n talk about the motters that wuz framed upon the
wall,

Er the carpet that y' say y'r mother made,
But to me the most endurin' recollection uv 'em all
Is the organ that my sister Lillie played.

WHEN THE GREEN IS ON THE BRUSH.

Y' c'n talk about the tickin' uv y'r big ol' eight-day
clock
When the punkin'-vines is frost-bit an' the fodder's in
the shock;
But it seems to me the tickin' uv a clock is mighty slow
When comparin' 'ith the frisky gaits that *my* heart likes
to go
When the hens has tuck t' settin' an' the'r brood begins
t' hatch,
An' a mess o' new p'taters c'n be grabbed from the
patch;
When the cabbage-rose is bloomin' an' the honey-
suckle's smell
Seems t' breathe a fragrant poem 'bout the girl y' love
so well!
Say! it sets my heart t' singin' like the music uv the
thrush
When the bloom is on the clover an' the green is on the
brush!

When y' go t' ketch the horses jist as soon as things is
light
An' y'r feet gits soaked 'ith dew that's 'cumulated
through the night;
When the Bob Whites is a-hollerin' an' the rabbits, ever'
one
Sets an' backs the'r ears an' winks at y' because y've left
y'r gun;
When y' set down to a table that's plum' full o' garden
sass
An' the butter's nice an' yellor 'cause the cows is eatin'
grass—
Oh, it sets my heart t' music like the singin' uv the
thrush,
When the pink is on the clover an' the green is on the
brush!
When y' meet y'r girl at Sunday-school an' go t' see her
home
An' she makes y' stay to dinner an then afterwards y'
roam
'Crost the medders wher' the dandelions is shinin' in the
grass

An' the buttercups jist beggin' y' t' pick 'em as y' pass!
When y' set down in the shadders, wher' the breeze is
 nice an' cool

An' proceed to real ol' courtin' an' obey the Golden Rule
By squeezin' of her hand an' gittin' kisses on the sly
(Which is doin' unto others as y'd like t' be done by)
Oh, it sets my soul t' singin' like the love-song o' the
 thrush

When the pink is on the clover an' the green is on the
 brush!

WHEN PAW GITS MAD!

My Paw's a mighty soshul man—
Maw al'ays says her husband can
Make frien's 'most ev'rywhere he goes.
He never has no bitter foes

To do him bad.

But he's no feathered angel when
He gits his dander up, an' then
In case y' ain't been doin' right
Y' better hustle out o' sight

When Paw gits mad!

Paw doesn't mean no special harm
By makin' things so 'tarnal warm,
But distance loans enchantment when
He's kickin' 'ith his Number Ten.

I' be so glad

If some insurance folks an' me
Could fix a' iron-clad guarantee
That I could always have my say
An' be a hundr'd miles away

When Paw gits mad.

Under the shed ol' Sancho crawls
An' won't come out—don't care *who* calls:
The roosters dassent try to crow,
But hangs their heads down meek an' low
 An' look so sad;
The tom-cat on the smoke-house roof
Don't ast no affidavit proof,
But makes a monst'ous jumpin' slide
An' runs to save his pesky hide
 When Paw gits mad.

Paw doesn't understand a boy;
He's 'feard I'll git too full o' joy
To 'tend to work an' things like that.
He's alway's 'quirin' wher' I'm at
 An' gits a gad;
An' if I entertained some doubts
'Regardin' of *his* wher'abouts,
The fac' soon settles on my mind—
They's somethin' goin' on, *behind*,
 When Paw gits mad!

I s'pose it's all in nacher'l law
A feller has to have one paw;
But if I'd ever got a chance
To talk to God some, in advance

(I wish't I had!)

I'd made him let me have two maws
An' give him lief to keep his paws;
An' then some other kid, you see,
Would git these lickin's, 'stid o' me,
When Paw gits mad!

THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

When Paw an' Maw talks polly ticks, y' hear some tall
discussion,

Fer Paw won't never yield a p'int an' Maw won't think o'
hushin'.

She says that Satan holds the reins an' runs the gover'-
ment;

That Congress daddies ev'ry scheme the Bad Man c'n
invent.

She 'lows the licker traffic is a-ruinin' the land,

The devil an' the whisky folks is workin' hand in hand;

The mysterious hand-writin' on the wall has done been
wrote,

An' the nation never can be saved till wimmen-folks c'n
vote!

When Paw an' Maw talks polly ticks he tells her she's a
fool;

Go learn her A B C 'zus in some economic sc cl

He says the trouble isn't caused by this excessive drinkin',
But it's because the lab'r in' people does so little thinkin';
Our blamed industr'al system is so idiotic crude,
'Ith some folks wallerin' in gold while others starves fer
 food;
An' the sov'reign, votin' masses don't control a gol-blamed
 thing,
But have turned the'r flag an' country over to the money
 ring.

When Paw an' Maw talks pollyticks, the men, she says,
 wants riches;
They'd ruther hear the silver dollar jinglin' in the'r
 britches,—
They'd ruther have a twenty-dollar gold piece in the'r hand
Than peace an' good will reignin' all supreme throughout
 the land.
The purifyin' influence in future pollyticks
'Ill when wimmen-folks c'n have a voice an' intermix.
The key-tone uv our nashnul life 'll be a higher note
When Jestice has her triumph an' the wimmen-folks c'n
 vote.

When Paw an' Maw has polly ticks, he says they ain't a
doubt

That Maw should pick a subjec' she knows sump'm' more
about.

He 'lows the' wouldn't be hard times, n'r never any strike
If the gov'ment owned the railroads an' the fac'tries an'
sich like.

He says the ruination of the country's comin' sure
If the trusts keep on a-grindin' an' oppressin' uv the poor.
That Wall Street must be overthrewed, an' his hope, an'
intent

Is to see in-dus-try governed by the U. S. gover'ment!

THE MAN FRUM ILLINOY.

The's a lot uv edjication that ain't in the books, I know,
Though uv course a school's a place that ev'ry feller ort
to go.

My Paw, he pays his taxuz, never kicks about the rate,
To "s'port the edjicashnul institootions uv the state."
That's what Paw says, but Bill says (he's our hired hand,
y' know)

That when he wuz a little boy he never got to go
To school but jist a little bit; an' Bill is orful wise;
Seems like 'at he c'n hold more inflammation to his size
Than any man I know uv; an' I surely do enjoy
His company, f'r Bill, y' see, he come frum Illinoy!

If I had Bill's edjication I'd have all that I could wish.
He knows what makes the geese go "honk" an' he knows
how to fish—

Pshaw! 'Fore Bill come to work fer us I us't to set an'
wait

An' didn't even know enough to jist spit on the bait!
If y' throw dirt in the water, w'y that'll make it rain;
An' if y' wave a real red rag, w'y that'll stop the train;
To find a horse-shoe in the road 'll bring y' lots o' luck;
A duck-egg under chicken hens 'll al'ays hatch a duck;
Y' want to hit behind the ear, to lick another boy—
Our hired hand says so, an' he—he come frum Illinoy!

To see a cross-eyed nigger 'll cure all y'r warts, dead sure;
The rich is gittin' richer an' the poor folks gits more poor.
If the's enough o' pulleys fixed, a fly could lift a ton;
A big full-bloomin' sunflower al'ays turns towards the sun.
You want to make a cow go 'long? Jist take an' twist
her tail!

It means a pile o' luck to find a rusty horse-shoe nail.
If the teacher's goin' to lick y' w'y y' want to git a chance
An' put y'r 'rithemetic an' spellin' book inside y'r pants.
An' "durn" ain't reg'lar cussin' (jist a kind o' swear-word
toy);

Our hired hand says so, an' he—he come frum Illinoy!

His talk won't make y' think that he has et a grammar
book,

But he's a man c'n do things, c'n sew buttons on, an' cook.
An' he c'n make a French harp play; an' whistle? like a
bird!

The finest hand a-callin' hogs, I bet, you ever heard!
'Most ev'rything 'll come fer Bill; the horses knows his
call

An' come a-lopin' up to foller Bill right to the'r stall.
Maw says that he's the best she ever saw, to milk a cow;
They give down more fer Bill than anybody else, somehow.
But it's awful disappointin' to a proud, ambitious boy
To be borned out here in Kansas, 'stid o' back in Illinoy!

CONDUCTOR ON A TRAIN.

I been a' kind o' studyin' jist what I'd like to do
When I git to be as big as Paw is now;
Maw says "I guess we ort to make a preacher out o' you,"
Paw reckermends "the life behind the plow."
My uncle says 'at congr'smen has awful easy times,
An' he's been to Washin'ton an' ort to know.
Then think o' rakin' in the nickels, quarters, halves an'
dimes
Like the man that sells the tickets at the show!

I'd like to be a soldier an' fight Injuns ev'ry day,
But ain't no Injun battles now, out west;
Geronimo an' Eagle Tail an' them jist draws the'r pay
An' puts the'r ration's underneath the'r vest!
I'd like to hunt fer pirates an' jist wipe 'em frum the sea,
An' be called the Terror uv the Ragin' Main,
But that wuz finished, too, before folks ever heard o' me,
So I guess I'll be conductor on a train!

The engineer, he gits to squint his eye along the track
An' makes her git a mile a minute hump,
An' then he has that poor ol' Mister Fireman at his back
An' makes 'im sling in coal at ev'ry jump!
He gits to toot the whistle an' he gits to ring the bell,
An' no work to do but jist set there an' rest;
I guess fer them that thinks so sich a job does very well,
But fer me. I'd like conductorin' the best.

I'd have a big blue uniform an' mebbly wear a sword,
An' people all 'ud say: "jist look at him!"
An' when I'd swell myself up big an' holler "All aboard!"
They'd rush around like jay-birds on a limb!
But pshaw! I'd never git on while the train wuz runnin' slow!
I'd wait till she wuz goin' good an' fast,
An' wave to Mr. Engineer an' holler "Let 'er go!"
An' jump on as the tail-end car come past!

I'd come a-struttin' down the aisle an' ketch some man
asleep,
An' holler "Tick-ets! Tick-ets!" once er twice,
An' if he didn't have none, guess he'd feel jist orful cheap,
'Cause I'd put him off an' let him walk the ties.

But if some pore widder woman 'ith a pale an' careworn
cheek

An' 'bout sixteen ragged kids, y' know, I'd say:

W'y, Madam, this is my train—y' c'n ride here fer a week

An' I wouldn't dream uv astin' any pay!"

I'd treat the folks all friendly an' they'd al'ays vote fer me

An' I'd mebby git to be a railroad king;

An' if I did—perhaps I will, now, you jist wait an' see—

W'y I wouldn't charge the people anything.

If I owned all the railroads—the Central an' Big Four

An' the Grand Trunk an' the Santa Fe an' all,

I wouldn't keep a-chargin' ev'rybody more;

An' the poor folks, them I wouldn't charge at all!

The train I'm goin' to run 'll be the fastest ever wuz;

I'll buy the biggest engine I c'n find

An' dump in a car o' coal at once an' then jist let 'er buzz

An' never in my life 'll be behind!

We won't stop at no stations but the biggest ones, y' know,

An' we'll call our train the Lightnin' Cannonball;

'Cause when I run a train she's got to git right up an' go

Er I wouldn't like conductorin' at all.

“SWEET BYE AN’ BYE,” WITH VARIATIONS.

I have follered my religion fer a heap o’ years an’ days,
An’ it’s been a pile o’ comfort in a pow’ful lot o’ ways.
When I ’uz a fiery youngster an’ I’d kind o’ want to cuss,
My religion ’ud persuade me that ’ud only make it wuss;
When I’d go to see Malindy an’ she’d set ’way over there
An’ infuse into the atmosphere a kind o’ chilly air;
When she’d go a-skitin’ by me in ol’ Andy Perkins’ rig,
A-slingin’ dust, an’ Andy by her, perked up proud an’ big,
My religion us’t to tell me that it wa’n’t no good to cry—
That it mout perhaps be diff’rent in the sweet ol’ “bye an’
bye.”

When we had our fust difickulty—we had ’em, you c’n bet;
Don’t believe no puffict marriages has ever happened yet—
An’ Malindy riz in majesty an’ handed down the law
An’ she lit out in the buggy fer a visit with her maw,
Religion says: “The’ ain’t no use o’ you a-gittin’ drunk,
Fer she’ll be a-scootin’ back here summut sooner ’n she
thunk.”

This here ain’t the dispensation in which miracles occur,
But I looked out in a minute, an’ by cracky, there she were!

An' I know the Lord'll he'p us if we'll only half way try,
An' 'll smooth our tribulations in the sweet ol' bye an' bye.

So at one time an' another, in I guess a thousand ways,
I have tested my religion an' I'm certain that it pays.
But t'other Sunday night I went to Mamie's city church,
Wher' the preacher has the pulpit in a elevated perch,
An' pews is real upholstered an' the's carpets in the aisle
An' frum corner-stone to steeple is the finger-marks o'
style.

I enjoyed it, fer the service an' the sermon both 'uz fine,
An' it seemed the congregation had a touch o' pow'r
divine;

But I come away a-feelin' kind o' hurt; I'll tell y' why—
They have got some variations on the "Sweet ol' Bye an'
Bye."

They had a blamed pianner; well, I don't object to that,
Though it seems to me the music uv it's kinder dead an' flat,
But the organist, piannerist—whatever that she wuz—
Wuz great on variations an' she 'most could make 'em
buzz.

She'd "toodle-tiddle-tootieum" an' "doodle-deedle-do";

The hull thirteen chromatic scales, she chased 'em through
an' through.

She'd have some forty-'leven notes a-playin' hide an' seek
About that old familiar tune that sounds so mild an' meek,
An' when I'd think she'd lost it out an' sort o' heave a
sigh

She'd wiggle in a few more notes uv "Sweet ol Bye an'
Bye."

If the'd hung a bunch o' penny ribbons in the preacher's hair
An' got some colored toy balloons suspended in the air;
An' had a cage o' monkeys 'ith some little bells to ring
To kinder brace the music when the people tried to sing,
I guess them variations 'ud 'a' been in proper grace,
But it somehow struck my gizzard they wuz orful out o'
place;

Like some pesky little preacher startin' on his own
account

To design some fine improvements fer the Sermon on the
Mount.

If they'll play it like it's written, or 'll condescend to try,
They 'll find the's lots o' music in that "Sweet ol' Bye
an' Bye."





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